622 554 614 honored as A-lo Wu-hêh. This person must be capable, intelligent, virtuous, and also advanced in age. Only after his death can another person of old age and great virtue be selected to succeed him in this honorary title. To be sure, it is a term of respect, but it also implies actual power, although the connotation is more moral than political.

141 The A-lo Wu-hêh of the Li-ch'ü branch is the tallest and biggest person in the Lolo community that the author met on this trip. He measures 184 centimeters in height as against the average height of 165 centimeters for the peoples of the world. This shows how tall and imposing Wu-hêh is. As for 577 115 123 his ideas and virtues, they can be proved by events the author has personally witnessed. To mention only one instance. The inspection team originally employed Ta-chi as the chief headman-protector to lead the expedition to the mountains, and Ta-chi in turn asked his nephew Lao-mu to be the second headman-protector. On the way Ta-chi also took in A-cho Chê-chio as a third headman-protector. Chê-chio is an alcoholic. After drinking, he would talk wildly and incoherently, and also act fiercely. Several times during the trip he cheated the inspection team and plotted to rob us of our money and belongings. After the inspection team had finished its work in San-ho-i-ta, Pa-p'u, and other places, Ta-chi intended to ask Chê-chio and Lao-mu to guide us out of the mountains as he himself had no desire to return to Lei-po city. Overhearing this news, we were deeply upset as Chê-chio had caused us enough trouble since entering the mountains and he was stopped only by Ta-chi's personal intervention on the spot. We would be in danger of being sold as slaves if Chê-chio should be responsible for the journey out of the mountains. Fortunately, before we were ready to leave, Ta-chi asked A-lo Wu-hêh for advice. Wu-hêh frankly reproved Ta-chi, saying that since Ta-chi had escorted the Chinese officials into the mountains, he should act cautiously to lead them safely outside. He also said that Chê-chio was too crazy a fellow to be trusted and if he should change his mind on the way, then misfortune would befall the Chinese officials and the reputation of the Li-ch'ü branch would be ruined. Hearing these words, Ta-chi became enlightened and decided again personally [26] to escort the inspection team out of the mountains. That same night, at Wu-hêh's suggestion, a public announcement was made that our entire team would depart the next day for Nü-hung and Wu-ch'i-ta-ch'i, and after passing Sheng-chi and crossing Huang-mao Kang, would leave the Lolo territory at La-mi. Actually this was a ruse to avoid the attention of Chê-chio and the others who had

1: Lin E-5 (1943) 1947 AE4 Lolo AE4

[71]

CHAPTER 7

CLASSES

564 567 The class system is a special feature of Lolo society which is divided into three groups: black Lolo, white Lolo, and Han-Chinese slaves. The very strict distinction between the black and white Lolo precludes any chance of mobility between them although the white Lolo, originally Han-Chinese slaves who have lived among the Lolo for a number of years, have been accepted by the black Lolo as their own kind. The newly captured slaves from the Han-Chinese territory have the lowest social standing and are looked down upon by both the black and white Lolo. However, if the Han-Chinese slaves become completely acculturated to Lolo life after having lived in their midst for generations, they would be allowed to intermarry with the white Lolo and eventually achieve white Lolo status. Therefore the division between the white Lolo and Han-Chinese slaves is only temporary, and social mobility tends to blur the boundary between them.

564 144 The black Lolo, who consider themselves aristocrats, are the ruling class; they are also believed to be the pure Lolo stock. According to the author's investigation, the black Lolo belong to the Mongoloid race with numerous physical traits similar to the Han-Chinese. For example, their stature, [142] their sparse black hair and brown eyes, their facial features and cranium shape, especially their eye fold, all point to a typical Mongoloid stock. Formerly, based on random observations during their travels, Western scholars considered the Lolo to be Caucasian — an apparently erroneous assumption. [141] Instead of being dolichocephalic, the black Lolo have a medium cephalic index. They differ from the Han-Chinese in certain physical aspects, such as dark skin, hooked nose, and big ear lobes. These merely indicate, however, that as primitive groups long isolated from the "central plains" and inhibited from exogamy, they have formed their own community and maintained their original physical traits. In other words, the [174] black Lolo are members of an ethnic group who have invaded and occupied the present Lolo territory, captured and enslaved those in surrounding areas, and maintained to this day their ruling position.